

First Timothy

Bible Commentary 2021

by

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Jesus Came To Save Sinners - 1 Timothy 1

1:3-4

"*No other doctrine*". Those words stand out to me. What does it mean? Paul told Timothy to command the Ephesians to teach no other doctrine. What is the doctrine Paul told Timothy to command the Ephesians to teach? What is the doctrine that was to be proclaimed, taught, and preached?

It can only be the gospel outlined by Paul in **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**. The gospel outlined by Paul was that **Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures**.

Paul asked Timothy to stay in Ephesus while he journeyed on to Macedonia. His request for Timothy to stay was to keep other people in line. He went on to say that people are easily distracted by "*fables*" and "*endless genealogies*". People were sidetracked on many topics and this includes people who try to teach the Bible in a systematic way. But what is the one doctrine we should teach, preach, and proclaim? Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again.

This gospel is what we need for godly edifying. This gospel not only saves us from our sins but it breaks the power of sin. This gospel humbles us and shows us ourselves in truth. We can see how much God hates sin and punishes sin when we look at Calvary. We can see how much God loves us. He sent his one and only Son to die in our place. Jesus received the punishment for our sins and in our place. It is amazing that people do not fall down at the foot of Calvary and thank God for his grace and mercy.

Everyone who continues in self-righteousness will suffer what Christ suffered at Calvary: separation from God. Separation from God does not sound horrible right now. But consider that everything good in this world comes from God. Consider that without God giving us structure, light, purpose, and common grace all we would have is unending darkness and suffering. That is hell. That is what is waiting for those who turn their backs on the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1:5-7

There are people who teach scripture but miss the point of why they teach scripture. Paul showed us the goal when we teach God's word. The goal is a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. We should take a closer look at these.

A pure heart can only come when a person no longer relies on their efforts to rid themselves from sin. Instead, when a person trusts in the Lord Jesus and his work then can he have a pure heart. A pure heart can only come through having faith in the gospel. **Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day.**

A good conscience means that our conscience which accuses us is silenced. How is this possible? It is only possible when the conscience believes that guilt is removed. God created us with a conscience which can only be satisfied by the gospel. Only when a man believes the good news of Jesus Christ can his conscience be satisfied and relieved of the burden of guilt.

Faith unfeigned means a sincere attitude of believing the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a faith which does not have ulterior motives. It trusts what God said in his word.

When people turn away from the gospel they will teach strange doctrines and use scripture to support strange topics. They think they help people when in reality they are turned aside to empty talk. Vain jangling means their teaching does not help anyone. It is only talk. It is empty words.

People desire to be teachers of God's word for a lot of reasons. Some who are naturally gifted as public speakers may feel a desire to be in front of people in order to build a name for themselves. We should be careful when listening to anyone teaching God's word to evaluate if what they say leads men to a pure heart, a clean conscience, and to faith unfeigned.

1:8-11

How do we use the law in a lawful manner? We do not try to bring a righteous man into bondage to the law by telling him to be a moral man. We do not tell a righteous man he should obey the ten commandments in order to be holy and sanctified. The law was not made for a righteous man. The law is made for men who are law breakers and rebels.

This is a basic mistake people make when they teach the Bible. It is a basic mistake to think teaching scripture means we teach people a list of rules, or morals, or how to live a good life. This is not the correct way to handle scripture.

Scripture is used to point men to Christ alone. That is all. Once a man is born again and has Christ Jesus in his heart then he is made righteous by God. A righteous man does not need to be taught to do what is right. He will automatically desire righteousness. He will automatically pursue holiness. Any born again man will desire to obey the will of God and the word of God. He does not need to be taught God's law because the law of God is written on his heart. He has the Holy Spirit living inside him and the Holy Spirit wrote the law of God.

One generation makes the mistake of teaching morality as Christianity. The next generation takes this a step further and teaches Christianity is about self-improvement and having a positive attitude. The generation after that no longer worship God any longer. They worship Self.

The solution is to preach the gospel. **Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day.** Outside of Christ you are worthless, hopeless, and are set on fire by hell. There is no hope outside the gospel of Jesus Christ now or in eternity.

1:12-14

Paul's ministry was enabled by the Lord Jesus. God gave him the grace and mercy he needed to fulfill the work which God called him to do. This is a great encouragement to anyone who has heard the voice of the Lord. When the Lord calls us he also enables us to hear and to do what he wants us to do. He gives us grace to do his will. His grace empowers us. His grace sustains us. His grace encourages us, protects us, and provides for us.

Paul knew exactly what kind of person he was when he met the Lord Jesus Christ. He was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. He did much harm to the church. But then God stepped into Paul's life and turned it all around. He opened Paul's ears so he could hear his voice. He gave him a heart to hear and to obey what he said to him.

He does the same today. The Lord speaks to us, and takes our ruined lives and turns it all around so we can honor him and bring glory to his name. We have all been ignorant and in unbelief. But God shined his light into the darkness of our night and led us out. He translated us out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of his Son Jesus Christ.

Now we have faith in the Lord Jesus and we love the brethren. May the Lord help us to continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ every day.

1:15-16

Paul's life was an example of the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. When looking at Paul we should always keep this in memory. Paul's mission was to preach the gospel of grace. His life was an example of God's grace. Paul was the worst kind of sinner and rebel against God before he was saved. Before Paul met Christ he was the furthest anyone could possibly get from being a Christian. However, after he met the Lord Jesus and was filled with the Holy Spirit he became an example of how God can forgive anyone. God can save any person who will believe and receive the gospel.

Anyone who trusts the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf will be saved. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. This is the gospel which saves our soul and gives us eternal life.

Paul said if he could be saved then anyone could be saved. This is the message of the gospel of grace. God can save anyone who will believe and trust in Jesus Christ.

1:17-20

Paul returned praise to God, and described God as eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God. We should meditate on these words. He is invisible. He is immortal. He is eternal. Thinking about this description should cause our understanding of God to expand beyond man-made religions. It is interesting to me that false gods are usually depicted as something people can see like an image, idol, or a picture in some way. However, God is invisible. You cannot see him. But you can hear his voice.

He will speak to you. God will communicate with you in words you can hear and understand. This is how he has chosen to reveal himself to us. He gave us his word. He gave us his Son, Jesus Christ, who is described as the Word of God by John in his gospel and letters.

Paul described ministry as "*warfare*". From this we understand we have a spiritual enemy who withstands our efforts to preach the gospel. How do we fight a good fight of faith? We must hold onto faith and a good conscience. We hold onto the faith by holding the gospel: Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Jesus is alive. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God. He lives now to intercede for us. He will return to rapture the church and establish his kingdom on this earth. Jesus will rule an earthly kingdom for a thousand years and then everything will be complete in the New Jerusalem. This is a plain description of the facts of the gospel and what is still in front of us to look forward to.

Some people will not hold to the gospel. They will turn away from the faith and will not keep a clean conscience. Paul gave the names of two men he knew who turned away from the faith and a good conscience. Paul said he turned these men over to Satan so that they would learn not to blaspheme. I have no idea what Paul meant when he said he turned people over to Satan. Whatever it means it must have been a painful experience for the blasphemers.

One thought to keep in mind. It is possible to shipwreck your faith. This is why the preaching of the gospel is important. Without this gospel of grace men will certainly go astray and get messed up.

Prayer And Intercession - 1 Timothy 2

2:1-4

Paul exhorted Timothy, and those whom Timothy could influence, and so also us to this day. We are exhorted to pray with different types of prayers. These prayers include supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks. This was to be done for all men. We are to pray for unbelievers as well as those within the household of faith. We are to pray for those in authority in government. Why? So we can lead quiet and peaceable lives in godliness and honesty. It is always easier to serve God when you are not being persecuted by your government. But that is exactly what happened during Paul's day. Christians were killed and persecuted by government. However, Paul told them to pray for the government and for those in government. We should pray for peace in our country, our state, our county, our city. Pray for the area where you live. Pray for the leaders. Ask God to intervene in the lives of those in positions of authority.

It is God's will for them to be saved. Somehow our prayers for them makes a difference. It makes a way for these people to hear the gospel and be saved. It is easy to forget to pray for those in authority. The natural man rebels against authority. However, a spiritual man will pray for those in authority. A spiritual Christian does not rebel against authority but prays for them. Paul set an example in his exhortation, and also in the testimony of his life. He was a witness to both small and great. Follow his example and be ready to share the gospel with those we come in contact with.

2:5-6

There are not many gods. There is only one God. People want to believe there are more than one God or that everyone's god is valid. But this cannot be. There can only be one God. If we look at this from a man-centered, humanistic viewpoint then it seems narrow minded to believe there is only one God. However, if you are willing to accept reality as it is then it makes plain sense there is only one God.

There must be a mediator between God and men. Why is this? Why must there be a mediator? Because God is holy, righteous, and pure. God is perfect and complete. However, men are broken, sinful, wayward, selfish, dirty, and completely unholy and unrighteous. How can the two come together? There must be someone who can stand in-between these two and be a mediator. Christ Jesus is our mediator. He is both fully man and fully God, and therefore he is God's perfect prophet and man's perfect priest. He is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other. Mary cannot help. A priest cannot help. Only Christ can help us.

Jesus gave himself on the cross as a ransom for us. He paid the price of our sins himself. Because the Lord Jesus paid the price for our sins God can now pardon us and be completely just in hating sin. God hates sin. Anyone who puts themselves on the side of sin and Satan are the enemies of God.

If we trust in Jesus and put our faith in his work then God forgives our sins and wipes out the evil we did in our lives. He wipes it away. He gives us a clean slate. A new beginning. In Christ Jesus there is always a new beginning. His mercies are new every morning. Great is his faithfulness.

2:7-8

Paul was ordained a preacher. He was not ordained by man to be a preacher. He made this clear in the book of Galatians and in his testimony that he was not ordained or sent by man but was called and set apart by the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not a job; this is not a career. This is a calling from the Lord. He was ordained a preacher and an apostle. An apostle is someone sent with a special message from God. Paul stayed with the message he received from God. His message was straight forward: Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Those who die in Christ also live in Christ. God himself places us into his son. This is the work of the Lord from first to last.

Why did Paul say he spoke the truth in Christ and did not lie? Because the weapon of the devil is to accuse others of lying. A liar accuses other people of lies. Remember, the devil is the accuser of the brethren. However, Paul solemnly testified the gospel he preached was not from man or by man, but he received it by revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.

He also described himself as a teacher of the Gentiles. Paul knew from the Lord that the church was more than Jewish believers in the Messiah. The church is made of Jews and Gentiles who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore our ministry should always be to every man, whether Jew or Gentile. Paul said he preached the gospel to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. (**Romans 1:16**).

Part of the Christian life is prayer. Paul spoke a lot about our prayer life. He talked about his prayers, and gave specific instruction on how to pray and what to pray for. Already in this chapter we have

instructions on praying for those God puts in a position of authority. We are to pray and intercede for people that they may come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember this was a letter of personal instructions to a young pastor. These are the ideas pastors need to communicate to themselves and their congregations. We must continually remind people to be humble toward authority, to pray for people, and to keep our mind fixed on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2:9-15

What is the underlying point here? Paul is addressing men and women in the church. He is teaching women to put emphasis on their spiritual lives. It is easier to focus on the outward appearance of the face with makeup and jewelry and neglect the spiritual beauty on the inside. Paul exhorts women, therefore, to take time to invest in their inner beauty and spiritual growth. There is also some plain instructions here that women are not to have authority over men in the church or teach men in the church. Why is this? Paul ties it back to the Garden of Eden and with Adam and Eve. He points back to the original order God put in place for men and women from the beginning. Jesus also used this principle when he taught about marriage. He pointed back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and how God established creation, man, woman, and marriage from the beginning.

In today's world people make up reality as they go. They try to pretend men are women and women are men. Why do they do this? My theory is this is Satan's method of destroying the image of God. He is trying to blot out the fact that mankind is made in the image of God.

Paul also underlined the importance of the role of women in nurturing their children. Men can leave a legacy through preaching in the church but it is women who nurtured those men when they were boys. Who has the most influence in the church? Each one has important roles. Men and women have distinct roles and responsibilities in the home and church. By blurring these distinctions we only invite confusion and heart break into our homes and churches.

Church Leadership - 1 Timothy 3

3:1-7

Paul addressed church leadership. The word "bishop" was used, but how can we know what a bishop looked like in the early church? How do we know when people in church corporations appropriate that word today that it means anything like it did in the early church? I will stick to the simplest meaning of "bishop" I can come up with, and that is simply church leadership.

To desire to lead others is not a bad thing. Paul said to desire to be a leader was to desire a good work. The church needs good leaders and those leaders should have a will to work. However, leadership within the church is not like leadership in the world system. People easily confuse leadership in the church with the leadership model in the world system. The worldly model of leadership is all some people know. Paul gives us a precise description of leadership in the church.

The character qualities of church leaders: blameless, a husband (man, by implication) with one wife, vigilant, sober, good behavior, hospitable, able to teach, does not drink alcohol, doesn't get into physical fights, is not in the ministry for money, patient, not covetous, manages his own family and

house, children are obedient, not a young Christian, but a seasoned, older Christian, and has a good reputation.

This is a specific list and we would be hard pressed to find men today who qualify for this role in the church. However, this is the scripture. This is the Holy Spirit telling us what to look for in a church leader. If a man does not live up to this he should not be allowed to lead the church. If a church or ministry allows a leader who does not follow this then they are inviting trouble. There will be problems and people will get hurt and will be vulnerable to attacks of the devil.

3:8-13

Paul addressed the subject of church leaders. He spoke on bishops and now he focused on deacons.

This list is the same or similar as the one for bishops. Paul touched on the following areas: serious attitude, plain talking, stay away from alcohol, don't get into the ministry for money, pure conscience, a mind that holds onto the gospel, proven by examination from the church, and family relationships must be biblical.

One thing added to Paul's statement regarding deacons was this promise that a man who used the office of a deacon well purchased to himself a "good degree, and great boldness in the faith". My take here is that faithful service increases our ability to share the gospel, to deal with people in spiritual matters, and also increases and strengthens our own personal faith in the Lord Jesus. I have found from experience while serving in a ministry that this is true. Serving others in ministry does increase and strengthen one's own spiritual muscle, and enables one to learn how to help others and also provides a man with a good reputation.

3:14-16

Paul repeated the gospel. He described the incarnation of Christ. God became a man in Jesus Christ. This is a mystery. Notice Paul said this message was preached to the Gentiles. It is important to remember the gospel is for everyone and not just a select group. The gospel is preached to everyone. Not everyone will believe the gospel, but we proclaim the gospel to every man. Some will believe the gospel. This message is received and believed by some people. The Lord Jesus was received up to glory. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. After spending time with his followers after his resurrection he ascended to heaven. This is described in the gospel accounts and at the beginning of the book of Acts.

Paul described the church. He said the church is the pillar and ground of truth. Many people interpret this to mean their particular brand of doctrine or denomination is the only church. This is not what Paul said. There was no such thing as a catholic or protestant church when Paul wrote this. The church was the people all over the world who believed the gospel and confessed with their mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Paul wrote this to Timothy so he would know how to conduct himself in the church. How do we conduct ourselves? Are we abiding in the gospel so when we have an opportunity to speak the gospel comes out of our mouth? Does the word of God saturate our thoughts and soul? What comes out of our mouth? Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

Last Days Deception - 1 Timothy 4

4:1-5

In the last days people who think they are "*of the faith*" will turn their back on the the gospel of Jesus Christ. Instead of sticking with the truth men will turn to false gospels. Seducing spirits will take control of churches and doctrines of demons will spread through the religious world. I believe I am living in that day the Holy Spirit described in this passage. We are living in a time of apostasy. Today people are turning to false doctrines and teachings promoted by evil spirits.

Paul gave us two things to look for in those who promote doctrines of devils. One is the teaching that men should abstain from eating certain kinds of foods. Another is the teaching that forbids people from getting married. I do not know how anyone can look at the Catholic church and not see that it promotes both of these doctrines of devils. They are not the only false church promoting a false gospel. Some other cults are Mormons, the Jehovah Witnesses, and more than I could ever list. They permeate society today. They are on every street corner handing out tracts and promoting heresies.

People who promote doctrines of devils show by their words and actions that their conscience is corrupted. I've never seen anything that can mess up a man's conscience worse than false religious beliefs. It will totally destroy a man's conscience. I've known pagans who had more of an intact conscience than some of the religious nuts I have met in my life.

May the Lord deliver us from lies. May the Lord help us to cultivate a love of the truth. May we abide in God's word and stay in prayer. We need to watch, pray, and stay close to the Lord in these last days.

4:6-8

A good minister of Jesus Christ reminds people of the truth in the gospel. We nourish ourselves with the gospel so when we speak what comes out of us is the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. We turn away from telling stories and instead train ourselves to speak the truth in love. We exercise ourselves to live and speak what encourages and promotes godliness. Physical exercise does some good but spiritual exercise goes beyond this current, temporary life and enters the eternal world of God's kingdom.

Brothers are easily lured into forgetting the basic gospel. We should constantly remind ourselves of the gospel, and in everything we say let the truth of Christ's work come out of us. The Lord Jesus Christ took our place on the cross at Calvary. He bore the burden of our sins on that tree. He became sin for us so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. God placed our sins on the Lord Jesus so that the righteousness of the Lord Jesus could be placed on us. He took our place. Now we live for him. We no longer live for ourselves but instead we live for him who died for us and rose again.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness. Go to God and confess your sins to him. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We cannot hide anything from God. The darkness is as light to him. He can see through the darkness as if it is day. Nothing is hidden from the eyes of him to whom we must give an account. We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give account of our lives.

Every idle word shall be examined. Do we have a fear of the Lord? The fear of the Lord is clean and good for you. It helps us live a pure and holy life. Let us pray we can live in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord bind us together with cords of love that cannot be broken.

4:9-11

Paul worked and suffered in ministry. His reason for working and suffering was because he trusted in the living God. Why did Paul refer to God as the "living" God? To Paul the Lord Jesus was not only a historical person, but someone who spoke to him, who communed with him, who communicated with him. Paul had a living relationship with God. How is our relationship with God? Is he a living God to us?

Notice how inclusive the gospel was to Paul. Paul said God was the Savior of all men. Jesus died for all men on the cross. The man who believes that Christ died for him personally benefits personally from what Christ did for him. However, the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus was not just for certain men. It was for everyone who believed. Jesus died for all men. This is a gospel for everyone. The man who hears, believes, and receives can benefit from what Christ accomplished.

This is what we should teach and preach. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. Turn away from man-made religion and philosophy and embrace the saving message of the gospel.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. Believe in the gospel. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved today.

4:12-16

Paul encouraged his son in the faith not to let his young age deter or discourage him from standing up for the truth of the gospel. Repeatedly Paul exhorted Timothy to meditate on doctrine. This is the key. The truth should permeate us so much that we speak the truth to anyone no matter who they are. In this way we overcome the fear of man. The most important thing we can do is preach the word of God without any fear of reprisal.

Not only did Paul teach Timothy but there were others who prayed for Timothy and confirmed his calling to ministry. We need to think about this. God uses people to confirm his calling on our lives. He can give us leaders and brothers in Christ who will encourage us in the work God called us to. We do not serve God on our own. We must serve the Lord in ministry in cooperation with brothers and sisters in Christ. No one can truly serve in the ministry alone. Paul made this clear in his letters. He always mentioned co-workers in ministry and the importance of humility toward people.

The word "save" here pointed to sanctification. Receiving eternal life comes completely by faith in the gospel. Christ died for our sins, he was buried, and he rose again on the third day. Nothing I can do to improve upon the salvation Jesus provided. We do cooperate with the Holy Spirit in his sanctifying work. This cooperation comes by staying in the word, meditating on the gospel, and by agreement to the truth.

It should be obvious we are making spiritual progress. If people cannot tell we are growing in the Lord then something is wrong. We must stick to the basics. Stay in the word. Stay in prayer. Meditate on the gospel. Commune with the Lord every day. This is the most important thing we can do every day.

Our effectiveness in helping others depends on our continual spiritual growth and communion with the Lord. The greatest gift we can give co-workers, family, and brothers in Christ is to stay close to Jesus.

Wisdom For Relationships - 1 Timothy 5

5:1-2

Paul outlined for Timothy the best method of dealing with different groups of people. He addressed first of all how to treat an elderly man. Paul said to treat him as a father. In other words, do not be condescending and do not be harsh. Instead, work with him to persuade him to do what is right and live according to truth. I have found from experience, when dealing with elderly people, this method is more effective than harsh correction. Older people will not listen, usually, unless they feel like you respect them. Even if they do not deserve your respect, if you will be effective in turning them toward the gospel, then you must deal with them in this manner of appealing to them rather than commanding them.

Younger men are to be treated as brothers. I wouldn't know how this works because my brother never had much to do with me. However, I guess this would mean you should treat younger men with compassion and affection and again not to be harsh with them. There is always a real temptation to belittle others or be condescending. Instead, we should be wholehearted, straight forward, and sincere with older and younger men. The longer I go on the more I am dealing with those much younger than myself. I have to remember to go easy on young people who are easily influenced and restrain myself from being harsh or overbearing.

Older women are to be treated as mothers and the younger women as sisters. In Paul's time these were simple and easy to understand instructions. It is harder in today's world for people to understand how to treat others like family. What is the family today? Most families are shattered, broken, and splintered in pieces. People have no example today to know how to show respect, humility, and compassion.

May the Lord help us remember the old ways of treating people with respect and dignity. We should seek to persuade people to see truth instead of harsh confrontation. Honey does better at drawing people in rather than vinegar.

5:3-16

The subject in this section is identifying and helping widows. Paul defined what a widow was. He then instructed family members to take this responsibility, and if no one was found to help then the church could help. It almost seemed Paul was doing all he could to teach that the church should be a last resort instead of the first place people turn for provision.

Widows, as defined by Paul, were over a certain age, had a specific reputation, and had no family members to help them. When these qualifications were met then the church was supposed to step in and help the widow. This was very important in Paul's day because there was no social security to fall back

on or social provisions made for the elderly or widowed. Families had to take care of each other. If there was no family then the spiritual family took over this responsibility.

Notice Paul used strong language when people call themselves Christian and fail to take care of family. He said someone who called himself a Christian but failed to help family were worse than unbelievers. How is this possible? The reason this was so bad was because they gave the name of Christ a bad reputation. People do this all the time today. People call themselves Christian and entire churches give the name of Jesus a bad reputation because they do not help people who are in need. There is no outreach happening in a lot of churches. Worse yet, church becomes a social club or a place of entertainment for people. Why is this happening? I think it points to where we are in the timeline of the last days. People are way off track with scripture, even in churches who claim to teach the bible chapter by chapter and verse by verse.

Each individual needs to let the Lord convict their conscience regarding these matters. If we have someone who is elderly and a widow in our families we should try to help them. Period. If you don't help then please don't tell anyone you are a Christian.

5:17-20

Elders could be those who were older but I think this pointed to leadership and especially those who led by teaching God's word. What is the message? People who labor in the church should receive financial support. Plain and simple. Also, we should protect people in leadership from reckless accusations. However, if someone in leadership is found to be in sin then it is to be rebuked in public so everyone can learn a lesson. So what are the points Paul covered? Pay the minister. Protect the ministry from reckless or unwarranted accusation. If the minister sins he needs to be exposed publicly for this. This is probably as a safeguard because who wants a sinning Pastor over a flock of unsuspecting sheep?

The part about rebuking someone who labored in the church is probably left to someone further up the chain of leadership than the Pastor. This means there needs to be a system of accountability. In some churches this will be a deacon board. In some churches this is a some kind of board like corporations have. At the very least anyone who is in the ministry should make themselves accountable to someone else who is working in the ministry, like another Pastor or co-laborer. Beware of anyone in the ministry who does not accept accountability or will not submit to others for moral or ethical auditing.

Notice Paul emphasized those working in the ministry deserve honor and respect. There is not a lot of people who will listen to God and allow God to use them in full time work within the church. Those who do accept this calling are often overlooked and disrespected by those on the outside and from within the congregation. It really is a thankless job. Probably few people can survive this kind of work unless they are well paid or unless they absolutely heard the voice of God calling them to this work.

5:21-25

This is a strong exhortation to observe and do according to Paul's instructions. Paul invoked God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels. He put these words in bold letters and underlined this for Timothy. He commanded him to observe these instructions without partiality toward one person over another. Why is this so dangerous? Why is it so important to treat everyone the same?

What does it mean to "*lay hands suddenly on no man*". I think this points to ordaining people in the ministry. This points to letting people in the ministry who are unqualified or do not have the qualities Paul outlined in this letter. It can be hard to hold people we like to the same standards as someone whom we do not like. However, Paul says to treat everyone the same. No one should receive preferred treatment. The world system is the complete opposite of this.

In the world system everything depends on a person's position and status. In the church, and the kingdom which is coming to this world, a person's title, name, and position do not matter. All that matters was that we were faithful with what God gave us. Remember we should want to hear the Lord say to us, "Well done good and faithful servant". The Lord does not reward us for elevating men over other men. He does not reward us for climbing up some economic, social, and business ladder. That reward is in the world system, but it should not be honored in the church.

However, what do we see today? People are honored by their titles, their positions, their certificates. They are honored because of who they know or are close to. This is in the outward church.

This is how I know that the majority of what we see in the outward church is just like the world. Many churches are just like corporations and worldly businesses and the people are a product which is bought and sold.

Paul concluded his comments with some instructions for Timothy to take care of his health. We must remember our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and we need to strive to take care of our health with exercise, eating right, and getting proper rest.

The Good Fight - 1 Timothy 6

6:1-2

We can translate these instructions into the employee and employer relationship. The lesson is to work hard, do a good job, but even more so if you happen to work for a Christian boss. Why? Because he is your brother in Christ! People tend to take advantage of Christians. Paul spoke to this. We are not to slack off because the boss is a Christian. We know a Christian shows mercy and grace. So people get lazy. But that is not the right answer. Instead, Paul taught us to work hard for the boss who is a Christian because he is a brother in Christ. We should want to benefit and help brothers in Christ.

There is another motive we should have for doing a good job and that is so we give the Lord Jesus a good reputation. If people know we are a Christian then we should want to work hard so we can make the Lord look good to other people. We do not want to give the Lord a bad name in front of unbelievers. The work place is where we spend most of our lives. It should be the place where we put our faith into practice. God has called us to be salt and light in the world and what better place to put this into action than the workplace.

Do you work hard? Do you get to work on time and put in a full day of work? Or are you lazy? Do you rebel against the authority placed over you? Can you receive correction, instruction, and direction from those who are over you? Your ability to humble yourself in the workplace and do what you are told will be a witness for or against the Lord Jesus. Keep that in mind next time you clock in at work.

6:3-8

We have the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospels and also in the book of Acts and in the book of Revelation. We have direct quotes which the Lord Jesus spoke to his disciples. We have these words still with us today. Is this what we focus our mind on? Do we read and meditate on the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. If not, then do you think it comes out in teaching, preaching, or sharing with others? Probably not. What you put in your heart is what will come out of your mouth.

Paul underlined what he called the "*doctrine which is according to godliness*". There is a doctrine, a specific teaching, which causes men to grow in godliness and spiritual maturity. What is this doctrine? In the next verse Paul described people who were proud and who argued over words. These people were promoting an alternative gospel or promoting something which took away from the preaching of the gospel. I was in a Sunday School one time with a person like this. They didn't come right out and try to preach another gospel but instead constantly stirred up strife, disagreed with the teacher, or tried to take over the class by talking or getting the teaching off on to some other topic. They created controversy or brought confusion into the classroom. In my opinion, people like this have some area of compromise in their lives which leave them open to be influenced by evil spirits to suppress the truth of the gospel.

Another distortion of the gospel is when men preach about financial gain. This kind of false doctrine and gospel has taken over entire church denominations in America. The false teaching of the prosperity gospel permeates most of the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, and probably is in other more conservative denominations as well. People who are influenced by these false gospels are all about "positive" thoughts, words, confessions. Eventually you can pick them out because everything they teach leads back to self-improvement, self-enhancement, and living the good life in the here and now. They don't spend much time preparing people for heaven and eternity, but instead give three point sermons on how to live a good, moral life in the here and now.

A key word which stands out to me in these verses is contentment. Also, since false teachers are proud then our goal should be to humble ourselves. We should live humble lives and be content with such things as we have. Grasping for new, better, or what someone else has is covetous. We need to turn our hearts away from things and instead turn our hearts toward the word of God. Let the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ fill your heart. Let it fill your heart until every time you share with someone your faith it will come right out of your mouth. Jesus Christ is Lord. He died on the cross for our sins. He was buried, and then he rose again on the third day, according to the scriptures. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father. He intercedes for us. He is coming back again. He will rapture the church. He will return to the earth and establish his kingdom upon this earth for a thousand years and then all will be complete when the New Jerusalem arrives from God out of heaven.

We have a lot to look forward to in God's plan. Let us pursue the doctrine of godliness and exhort one daily while it is still today. The night is coming but it will only last a short while. Then the new morning will arrive and we will be with Jesus forever and ever.

6:9-10

Why do people want to be rich? Most likely because they want to be in control and independent of other people. Most people do not want to be under anyone else. Most people do not want to be told what to do or how to live their life. How do people think they can escape from being underneath other people? By having more money, having more power, having more influence. Sadly, this is deception. Paul said those who will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. Yet people still work their entire lives for money, position, power, influence, and it is only at the end do they realize, like Solomon, how empty and vain it is.

I've heard people say they do not love money but still want money so they can do more good in the world. I've heard Christians say they don't love money but they want to be rich so they can do more good. This is a subtle deception. The only way to escape these deceiving spirits is to stick with what the Bible says. If any man desires to be rich he will fall into temptation. He will fall into a snare. He will fall into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction. Do we think we are spiritually strong enough to go against the plain, written word of God and somehow escape what it says? Do we think our motives are really so pure? Do we really think we are more spiritual than other people, or that we have better motives than other people? If you want to be rich and God keeps you poor it is because he loves you and knows you would destroy yourself with that money.

There are people today who have erred from the faith. They listen to false preachers who twist God's word into saying we should pursue money and wealth so we can do more good for ourselves and others. These are deceiving, lying spirits in the church. They have corrupted an entire generation of believers in these last days. This is the generation of believers who "confess" they are rich but they are really the lukewarm Laodicean church the Lord warned about that he would spit out of his mouth.

Having more money is not the answer. Having more of Jesus is the answer. What did Jesus himself say about money? Let us go back and quote the words of the Lord Jesus Christ and what he said about money and riches. Read **Matthew 13:22, Matthew 19:23, Matthew 19:24, Mark 4:19, Mark 10:23-25, Luke 1:53, Luke 6:24, Luke 8:14.**

Can a rich man be saved? With God all things are possible. However, what happened to the rich man who got saved? What happened to Zacchaeus after he was saved? He gave it away! He would rather be poor and with Jesus than hold onto the money he had. Read **Psalms 37:16, Proverbs 15:16.**

Only a foolish man will pursue money and wealth in this life when we have the plain teaching from Jesus that we should instead be storing up treasures in heaven. Everything here will be gone one day. Everything will die and fade away on earth. But the true treasures that will last forever is our investment in God's kingdom. Those who give of their resources for God's kingdom are investing in the only future that will count for eternity. Don't underestimate the deceitfulness of your heart when it comes to money and riches. Seek God's kingdom first. Do not seek after money, power, and treasure in this present world. Seek God's kingdom and his righteousness. God will provide for your needs and he will protect you.

Go back and read the story about the rich man and Lazarus. Who was the man who was in hell? Who was the man in heaven? Take it to heart. If Jesus said the rich man was in hell and the poor man was in

heaven there is a reason he said this. Don't think you are more spiritual than other people or somehow can escape the plain, written words of the Lord Jesus Christ. You will not escape the truth.

Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Let us humble our hearts. Let us repent of being covetous and loving self more than loving the Lord. Let us repent of self, sin, Satan, this world. Ask God to open your eyes so you will not be deceived by your own heart and pride.

6:11-12

There are things a man of God should flee. No matter how spiritual you think you are you cannot fight some things. You cannot beat some things. You have to run. You have to get away from some things. In this context, what are those things Paul told Timothy to run away from? Paul told Timothy to run as fast as he can away from that attitude of covetousness. He is telling Timothy to flee from the love of money.

What is the love of money? It is a desire to be independent of other people and to have control over the lives of other people. What does money represent? It is power over others and independence from others. It is the exact opposite of what a Christian is supposed to be. That is why you flee from the love of money. This is why it is the root of all evil. The love of money is a fundamental watershed and separation between the lovers of the world system and those who love God. There can be no mixture. These principles of life are in complete opposition to one another.

Christians who desire to be rich and fool themselves into thinking that it is only so they can "help" people are deluding themselves. Scripture says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? You cannot know it. I can't know it.

We cannot trust our best intentions or motives. We need to run away from what the Bible says to run away from. What are we, instead, to follow after? What are we to pursue? We are to pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Read **Galatians 5:22-23**.

Peter also exhorted us to grow in character in faith, and make this our focus instead of pursuing worldly goals of position and power. Read **2 Peter 1:5-8**.

The good fight is to follow after the Lord. We should focus on believing the gospel and growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ every day. Make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof.

6:13-16

What stands out to me in these verses is the phrase "*until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*". There is a future event which will happen. It is already on God's calendar. This event will be what the Bible calls the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ will return to this earth from heaven. The first time Jesus was on the earth it was as a lowly Savior riding on a donkey into Jerusalem. The second time Jesus returns it will be as King of kings and Lord of lords. Paul was not the

only one who saw this in the future. The apostle John also recorded these future events for us in the book of Revelation. He saw the Lord Jesus returning on clouds of glory riding on a white horse.

These are not stories. These are not metaphors. These are actual events that have yet to take place but will certainly come to pass in time. The Lord Jesus will return to this earth to execute judgment and to set up his kingdom on this planet. For 2,000 years Christians have prayed, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." This prayer will be answered. The Lord Jesus will return to earth. He will sit on his throne over all the nations of earth. He will rule all the nations of earth. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

6:17-21

Paul continued his earlier thought about people who were rich in this world. Paul charged Timothy to teach them to give their money away and not to trust in money but in the living God who provides for us.

How do we demonstrate we no longer trust in money but instead trust in God? By giving our resources towards helping other people. He instructed Timothy to teach wealthy people to be rich in good works and distribute their wealth and give it away. By doing this they could have true riches which wait for us in heaven. This is in agreement with the teaching of the Lord Jesus. Jesus told the rich young ruler to give away everything and follow him. When Zacchaeus came to faith in Jesus he gave away his money. Look for this as a sign that someone is truly converted when they no longer value what this world values but instead learn to trust in God as provider, protector, and portion.

Paul's final word to Timothy was one we need to hear in our time. Do not pay attention to false knowledge or science. Prideful society and the world system created alternative realities which people put their trust in. They call it science, or "knowledge", but it is lies. There is enough correct information in modern science that people are deceived by the rest of it. This is how the enemy works. He tells enough truth that people will accept his bag of lies and tricks.

Paul's final word for Timothy was to receive the grace of God. This is what we need daily. We need God's grace daily to restore our soul and spirit and to keep us on the road of eternal life.

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